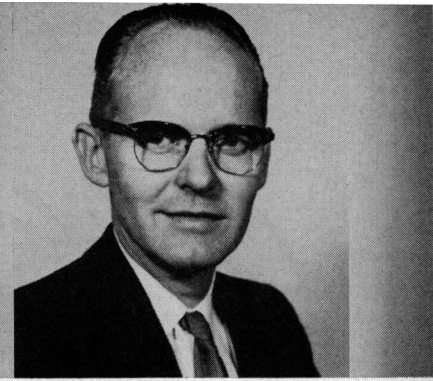


The President's Page



Health Security, American Style

SHOW ME A MAN who can't work or help himself and I will show you an unhappy man. Show me an ally who is given free money without responsibility and I will show you a turncoat. Happiness is not a destination . . . it is a journey; one of challenges met, obstacles overcome, victories gained. Therein lies the key to vitality, to new frontiers, to America and all it stands for . . . the dignity, value and happiness of individual effort and achievement . . . at any age.

And these truisms apply to government as it serves citizens. To the extent that government fosters opportunity, it provides a meaning to life; and to the degree that it permits rewards for individual effort, it creates contentment. The contrary patterns of rewards without achievement; support without effort, no matter how subtly given, ultimately destroy the mainspring of living.

True, in a civilized society the individual must have some security from catastrophe, and the older the person the more vulnerable some may be. But the rules for providing this security for health, housing and food must be such as not to violate the basic rules for contentment that apply for all people.

So it is with medicine's belief as regards methods for providing the security for the health needs of all citizens—even those made "aged" at 65 by legislative fiat. Government largesse (and for that matter why not include food, clothing, shelter?) could be distributed as a "right" of a citizen for not being dead . . . to be given to all, rich and poor, hungry or surfeited, robed or threadbare.

However, with the challenge of communism, medicine does not believe that America dares destroy, by wanton dispersals without need, the basic moral fiber that has made her great. Also, where need does exist, the resources to help it must not be dissipated by profligate and stultifying gratuities to those who have happily experienced the exhilarating challenge of successful, personally achieved security. Therein

lies the heart of the differences between the two philosophies for providing government health care to citizens.

The California Legislature, the Administration and your C.M.A. have been national leaders in implementing a logical, generous and responsible bill designed under the Kerr-Mills Law. It does meet the honest needs of the older citizens, it will stimulate and permit the entire health team to function at its best. Within its enlightened provisions, wherein "the poorhouse" and "bankruptcy" are no longer threats, an exciting new concept in government participation has been initiated, one that your medical society molded, nurtured and supported.

How frequently one hears doctors cry: "Isn't the medical profession ever *for* anything? Why doesn't Medicine have a plan, come forward with something new that doctors, their friends, rational citizens and responsible legislators can all get behind!" In an inflationary, dollar devaluating economy, some need does exist for those with modest resources, and a method for help must arrive before financial collapse!

Yes, your medical society—county, state and national—has worked hard, united and with public dedication, to develop a positive program to meet the need, to acknowledge wherein government should help, and to do so in a framework that will permit medicine and the health sciences to work at their best quality and dedication.

It was with much pride the California Medicine's leadership in the nation was presented before an attentive, respectful and very knowledgeable Ways and Means Committee. So do not, you yourself, cast aside this enlightened law for health security, American style, until you have seen it in action, read and discussed it, and can know personally its many virtues.

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